

RFK Jr. Launches Investigation as American Psychological Assoc. Accused of Treating Zionism as Pathological Mental Illness

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, led by Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., is investigating the American Psychological Association in response to a complaint filed by the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law.

Jewish News Syndicate reported, "The Brandeis Center filed a complaint with HHS on Aug. 8, 2025, alleging that the APA has 'become one of the worst purveyors of antisemitism and extremist ideology in healthcare.' The complaint states that the association, which has more than 172,000 members, receives millions of dollars in federal funding annually."

The complaint also alleged that the association's conferences have featured sessions "portraying the Oct. 7 attacks in Israel as attacks on military targets."

"It further cites messages sent by association members through listservs that 'glorify Hamas, call for boycotts of Israel, compare Gaza to the Warsaw ghetto and pray for Israel's destruction.'"

The Brandeis Center said in a Wednesday news release that its complaint "urges HHS to review the APA's conduct as a recipient of federal funding, citing evidence that the organization promoted discriminatory and anti-Semitic practices, including 'Decolonial Therapy,' a treatment model increasingly used to frame Zionism as a mental illness and encourage patients to reject it; anti-Israel and anti-Semitic

messaging disseminated through official channels; anti-Semitic continuing education and conference programming; and the marginalization of Jewish and Israeli psychologists."



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"In a June 2 letter to the Brandeis Center, OCR [HHS Office for Civil Rights] stated that it had determined there was sufficient authority and cause to investigate whether the APA engaged in discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act," the news release noted.

Kenneth Marcus, chairman and CEO of the Brandeis Center, said in response, "When one of the nation's most influential psychological organizations permits anti-Semitic discrimination and marginalizes Jewish professionals, federal civil rights scrutiny is entirely appropriate. We commend HHS for taking these allegations seriously and investigating whether federal law has been violated."

Rebecca Harris, an attorney at the Brandeis Center, told Jewish News Syndicate, "You have anti-Israel activist psychologists teaching courses about 'psychic militancy' and teaching about how to incorporate the 'resistance' or the 'Palestinian liberation struggle' into the clinical practice of mental health care."

Harris stated, "Our hope is that HHS will ensure that if APA is going to continue to be a recipient of federal funds, that it comes into compliance with its obligations under the federal civil rights law, that it's not discriminating against its Jewish members, that it's not promoting discrimination of Jews within the broader mental health profession."

Zionism is defined as a political movement that supports the

Jewish people's right to have a nation-state in their ancestral homeland, according to Britannica.

The Brandeis Center's complaint against the APA comes as Gallup reported in February that more Americans now sympathize with Palestinians than Israelis.

Palestinians want a nation-state separate from Israel. Terrorist groups like Hamas and its supporters want the Jewish state eliminated entirely "from the river to the sea" – in other words, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea.

Gallup found that in terms of the actual geographic lands, 46 percent view Israel favorably, while 37 percent view the Palestinian Territories that way. Some 57 percent of Americans support a separate Palestinian state, which nearly matches the high-water mark set in 2003.

"Forty-one percent of Americans now say they sympathize more with the Palestinians in the Middle East situation, while 36% sympathize more with the Israelis. The five-percentage-point difference is not statistically significant, but it contrasts with a clear lead for the Israelis only a year ago (46% vs. 33%) and larger leads over the prior 24 years," the polling firm said.

Gallup added, "From 2001 to 2025, Israelis consistently held double-digit leads in Americans' Middle East sympathies, with the gap averaging 43 points between 2001 and 2018. However, public opinion began narrowing in 2019, several years before the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israel and the subsequent war in Gaza."

Drilling deeper into the sympathy question shows a wide partisan divide.

"Seven in 10 Republicans (70%) say they sympathize more with the Israelis, compared with 13% who sympathize more with the Palestinians. Although this remains a substantial gap,

sympathy for the Israelis among Republicans has declined by 10 points since 2024 to its lowest level since 2004," Gallup said.

Meanwhile, 65 percent of Democrats said their sympathies lie more with the Palestinians, while 17 percent are with the Israelis.

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